



DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION

OFFICE OF MINE RECLAMATION

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California Abandoned Mine Lands Forum May 17, 2006 Minutes

Meeting Location:

Natomas Unified School District
Maintenance & Operations Transportation Breakroom
1931 Arena Blvd.
Sacramento, CA 95834

FACILITATION AND MEETING SUMMARY

Facilitator: Stephen L. Jenkins, Michael Brandman Associates

Meeting Minutes: Erika Bennett, Michael Brandman Associates

ATTENDEES

Erika Bennett, Michael Brandman Associates
Jan Carey, Department of Conservation, Abandoned Mine Lands Unit
Tom Filler, State Lands Commission
Tracy Gidel, Nevada County Dept. of Environmental Health
Stephen L. Jenkins, Facilitator - Michael Brandman Associates
John Key, Bureau of Land Management, California State Office State Program Lead
Susan Kohler, Department of Conservation, California Geological Survey
Scott Leiby, Carlton Engineering
Curtis Lindskog, Shaw Environmental
Patrick Morris, Regional Water Quality Control Board, Central Valley
Cy Oggins, Department of Conservation, Abandoned Mine Lands Unit
Greg Pelka, State Lands Commission
Sarah Reeves, Department of Conservation, Abandoned Mine Lands Unit

Start time: 10:10 a.m.

I. Welcome, Introductions and Agenda Review

Steve Jenkins opened the meeting, welcomed AML Forum attendees and asked for introductions around the table. Attendees also completed the attendance sign-in sheet to help update the AML Forum master email list.

II. Announcements

Cy Oggins, Manager - DOC, Abandoned Mine Lands Unit, provided an update on the status of California's efforts to secure funding under the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Restoration of Abandoned Mine Sites (RAMS) Program. This item was a follow-up to information provided at the March 2006 AML Forum meeting. Cy reported that RAMS information packets were provided to 14 congressional members, and that Office of Mine Reclamation staff had met with or had telephone conversations with the offices of Congressman Jerry Lewis, who is the Chair of the Appropriations Committee for the House of Representatives, and Senator Diane Feinstein. Diane Feinstein's office has already contacted people at the Bureau of Land Management and the National Parks Service.

The coordination effort also included working very closely with the Governor's office and Cy was pleased to report that on March 17, the Governor sent a letter to Congressmen David L. Hobson and Peter McCloskey—the Chairman and another Member of the House Subcommittee for Energy and Water respectively—which listed 6 critical priority areas for California, one of which is abandoned mine restoration. An Appropriation Committee recommendation of \$4.9 million for 2007 to the Corps to support restoration to 16 mine projects may be reflected in the upcoming Fall 2006 budget.

The State has pursued RAMS funding in the past and has never succeeded. However, this issue has now been raised this to the level of the Governor, and to Congress, and hopefully this will raise the level of awareness of this issue.

In another announcement, Patrick Morris from the RWQCB brought up Assembly Bill AB2901, the Mercury Monitoring and Remediation Act. The Bill has been referred to the Assembly's Appropriation Committee and there is a hearing today.

Patrick also noted that a recently introduced federal bill relates to Good Samaritan, third-party protection. Patrick Morris provided the following weblink to those who are interested in obtaining the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's information on this bill <http://www.epa.gov/goodsamaritan/legislation.html>. The bill, which if approved would enact the "Good Samaritan Clean Watershed Act," is now numbered S. 2780; the corresponding House version of the bill is H.R. 5404.

III. Meeting Location/Time

Steve Jenkins mentioned that the purpose of the discussion is to try and provide a central location for those who travel from out of the area, and to possibly open up greater participation in the AML Forum from those in Southern California.

- Forum members discussed having the meetings in a regular location, or at topical/geographical locations based on Agenda topics to become more familiar with the local issues and as a good way to get political awareness.
- All agreed that 10 a.m. is a good time to start Forum meetings.

- Regarding ideas on how the AML Forum can attract more attendees such as Fish and Game, Parks and Recreation, etc. the members suggested frequent notices and monthly reminders.
- It was also agreed that conference call availability be an option for future meetings, and that the meeting site should have this capability.

Meeting locations suggested by the group included:

- Tracy Gidel offered to host a meeting in Nevada City, Nevada County.
- State Lands Commission in Sacramento, which can do conference calling.
- Possibly Rancho Cordova office of the RWQCB.
- Shaw Environmental in North Natomas, if booked in advance.

Tracy's offer of a meeting in Nevada City was well received. Forum members noted that a county facility located in a county that has a particular AML issue or an AML site in their respective area could bring greater awareness of the mission of the AML Forum.

IV. Review of Previous Meeting Minutes.

The attendees reviewed the minutes from the previous meeting on March 15, 2006. There were no changes, exceptions, or objections.

V. Review Cost-Benefit Analysis of AML Remediation Projects

As discussed at the December 2005 Forum meeting, there seems to be a lot of interest and enthusiasm in trying to quantify the cost benefits of abandoned mines closure, remediation and mitigation projects.

The purpose of the discussion was to develop examples of cost benefits, based on abandoned mine sites that had been previously completed and to develop a template such as the example included with the Meeting Agenda.

Cost is going to vary for each mine. Based on previous presentations by the BLM and the Forest Service, and the two different approaches that the agencies took to address site-specific mercury cleanup issues, cost-benefit information might have suggested alternative means of addressing the issue including long range land use plans that might need to be considered. Does the cleanup meet public health standards or just cover the problem to be dealt with in the future?

Action Item: Curtis Lindskog of Shaw Environmental has experience on some larger mines. He volunteered to develop a form to capture cost benefit as best as possible for projects they've worked on, including front-end, middle, and back-end costs.

Action Item: Forum members were requested to provide cost/benefit information prior to the next meeting on August 9, along with any suggested modifications to the example template.

VI. How to Increase Public Awareness about AMLs

Forum members discussed their ideas on how to increase awareness of abandoned mine issues.

Within the last month, attention and awareness of mine safety issues increased due to several recent deaths and injuries, including four major accidents in four weeks. (Handouts regarding recent events, and suggested campaigns were made available at this meeting).

Suggestions for public outreach that Forum members suggested include:

- Sign postings – in various languages if possible.
- Classrooms – Proactive Education
- Outreach at State and County Fairs, Earth Day promotions, the California Association of Professional Scientists Science Fair, etc.
- Boy / Girl Scouts
- Cable companies – Public Service Announcements
- County meetings
- Compatible land use components
- Education through State Parks and/or Fish and Game
- Office of Planning and Research – Annual book of lists
- Motorcycle/ATV, mountain bike, and SUV manufacturers, etc. *
 - *could be a potential source of funding for various types of programs
- California Off Road Vehicle Association (CORVA)
- Department of Toxic Substances Control publications
- Agency website postings
- Professional Industry Associations
 - Conferences
 - Publications
 - National Brownsfield Association

VII. Review of Why Do Attendees Participate in AML Forum

Regarding the “homework assignment,” Forum participants were to provide a one paragraph explanation of why they are attending the AML Forum and what they and their agency want to get out of the Forum. (Only one has been received to date). The Facilitator stressed the importance of finalizing assignments prior to the next meeting.

Many agencies have a process regarding how they deal with abandoned mines. How are they similar? Different? Where is the overlap? How do the processes relate to each other? How do the agencies coordinate with each other? It would be great to create a flow chart of the agencies processes work. To date, this has not started. There would be value in creating such a chart. What is the solution to getting people involved in this process? Or if this is not possible, does the group revert back to a show and tell type of forum?

Action Item: Tracy Gidel discussed a process that he is using to show interrelationships in his work, and volunteered to demonstrate this process at the next AML Forum meeting.

Action Item: When all homework assignments are done, the Facilitator will work with Cy and Sarah to provide overall matrices as to why each person and agency is participating in this program.

VIII. Future Meeting Schedule and Agenda Ideas

The next meeting is scheduled for **August 9, 2006 at 10:00 a.m.** in Nevada City.

Eric W. Rood Administrative Center
Empire Room (Second Floor)
950 Maidu Avenue
Nevada City, CA 9595

Agenda ideas and suggestions for future meetings:

- Develop AML Process flow chart for each agency to combine into overall chart.
- Identify broader AML funding sources, future opportunities, and submittal deadlines in advance.
- Suggestions for other presentations on successful vs. non-successful mine projects.
- Projects both large and small. Also, projects out of state.

Forum Adjourned – 11:45 a.m.